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CENTENNIAL
ORATION,

HAVERHILL, JULY 4, 1876.

THE
COLONIAL AND REVOLUTIONARY
HISTORY OF HAVERHILL.

A CENTENNIAL
ORATION,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE CITY GOVERNMENT AND
THE CITIZENS OF HAVERHILL,
JULY 4, 1876.

BY JOHN CROWELL, M. D.

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ORATION.

MR. MAYOR AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

Two hundred and thirty-six years ago a little band of men came from the neighboring towns of Ipswich and Newbury and settled in this pleasant valley of Pentucket. From the banks of the Merrimack to the Canada line stretched the primeval forest, unbroken, save where the frail villages of the red man dotted the intervalles or nestled along the shores of the lakes.

Under the sanction of Governor Winthrop, and having received a deed of the vast tract of land from the Indians, these intrepid men began their work of clearing the forest, erecting their rude dwellings, and preparing the land for cultivation.

The limits of the township originally included most of the territory now forming the townships of Salem, Atkinson, Hampstead and Plaistow, N. H., and Methuen, Mass.

In 1642 the deed of the town was given to John Ward, Robert Clements, Tristram Coffin, Hugh Sheratt and William White, by the chiefs Passaquo and Saggahew in consideration of the sum of three pounds and ten shillings. The plantation received the act of incorporation in 1645.

With these small but honorable beginnings our fathers commenced the foundation work upon which the children have so nobly built. The casual student of history may ask—"What impelled the early settlers of New England to come to this uninviting region and engage in the rough

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work before them? No genial climate allured them hither, nor did the hope of gain tempt them with its glittering prize as in the case of the Spanish adventurers."

But a more careful study of history will show us, that they were impelled by the same spirit, modified by Christianity, that sent the Angles and Saxons from their Jutland home to infuse their bold freedom into the faltering souls of the timid Britons. It partook of the elements that sent Norman William over from France to implant a new civilization among the Anglo-Saxon race. It was the aggressive spirit that scorns the narrow limits of traditionary systems, and bounds into a freer atmosphere, developing new sources of strength and enterprise. It was the spirit of liberty, that rises above the limitations of thought or action prescribed by tyrant rule or priestly sway. It was the simplicity of truth asserting itself amid the dogmas of bigots, and the traditions of an aristocratic power.

THE MEETING-HOUSE.

Men actuated by this spirit do not look back; they push on, and, with increasing strength they overcome the most formidable obstacles. And so these few men did not fail, and with a sublime faith they built by the side of their log cabins a rude structure for the worship of God, and they recognized the Divine Presence in every stage of their enterprise. This first meeting-house was erected in 1648 upon the site now occupied by the Penneket cemetery. It was twenty-six feet in length by twenty in width, with neither porch, cupola or

gallery. In the absence of a bell, Richard Littlehale was ordered to beat the drum on the Lord's day morning, and on lecture days, for which he was to have annually the sum of thirty shillings. Littlehale's drum was afterwards substituted by Abraham Tyler's horn, which was ordered "to be blown in the most convenient place every Lord's day about half an hour before meeting begins, and also on lecture days, for which he is to have one peck of corn of every family for the year ensuing." The blowing of the horn was of short duration and our fathers soon returned to the more dignified call of the drum. The pews of this little meeting-house were rude benches, and for the protection of the women from the savage attacks, the men occupied seats nearest the door, ready to resist the barbarous foe; and this custom of placing the women in the further end of the pew has been handed down to us, although a rigid adherence to the order is fast becoming obsolete. Rev. John Ward was the godly man who took charge of this little flock, and for fifty years he was their faithful leader, teacher, counsellor, and spiritual guide. His colleague and successor, Rev. Benjamin Rolfe, says of him in his ordination sermon: "These four years past have been the happiest and most profitable of my whole life. I have had the counsel of wisdom and experience, the admonitions of a father and friend, and an example constantly before me of undissembled virtue, ardent piety and burning zeal."

Mr. Ward came from the town of Haverhill.

Essex County, England, and the name of Haverhill was given to this town in honor of the first minister, who did so much for its growth and prosperity.

He died in 1693 at the ripe old age of eighty-eight years, having preached his last sermon only a few weeks previous. His remains were interred in the old cemetery, and a handsome marble shaft has been recently erected to his memory by his descendants in the Saltonstall family. His will opens with these characteristic words: "O Lord, into Thy hand I commit my spirit." "*Credo languida, fide sed tamen fide.*"

In the course of years the little meeting-house became insufficient for the accommodation of the increasing population, and in the year 1666 we find that John Hutchins was employed "to build a gallery at ye west end of ye meeting-house, and to take any of ye inhabitants of ye town to join him, providing he give nottise to ye town whether he will or noe at ye next training day, so that any of ye inhabitants of ye town that hath a mind to joyne with him may give in their naines." This primitive structure served its purpose well for many years, when, near the close of the century the town became agitated upon the question of a new meeting-house, and so great was the controversy as to the style, size and location of the proposed edifice, that several years were spent in the quarrel between the contending parties, and there was much bitter wrangling at town meetings before the matter was peaceably decided. This second meeting-house, situated at the

head of the common, was a comely structure, two stories in height, with tower and steeple, and turret for a bell.

But a new trouble arose as to the method of disposing of the people in the pews, and so a committee was chosen, Nov. 20, 1699, to "place or seat the people in the new meeting-house, that they may know where to sit, and not disorderly crowd upon one another, and be uncivil in the time of God's worship." And to make justice more evident another committee was chosen to seat the seating committee, "so that there may be no grumbling at them for picking for and placing themselves." Let us in imagination join the sturdy worshippers at this new temple on the morning of the Lord's day. We must set out early, for a heavy fine is the penalty for being late, and one equally heavy will be imposed for riding fast to meeting. It is nine o'clock, and, passing the whipping post and stocks with a nervous shudder, we enter the house by the eastern porch. But the pews are filled by greater dignitaries, and so we take a seat on a rude bench near the door. We must be careful to preserve the gravest decorum, for the grim tithingman has an eye upon us, ready to detect the slightest deviation from his ideal of good behavior in time of service. And now comes a solemn hush, as the sexton is seen escorting the minister up the gravelled path. He takes him with becoming dignity through the open double door, up the main aisle, and graciously leads him to the pulpit stairs. The pastor, dressed in well-fitting small clothes,

black silk stockings, and bright, shining shoe buckles; with well-powdered wig hanging in massive rolls over his shoulders, looks benignant-ly upon his people. After prayer a psalm in metre is given out, and dictated line by line by the deacon to the nasal music of the congregation. Then follows the "long" prayer, occupying from a half an hour to an hour, during which time we all stand leaning upon the backs of the pews. And then comes the sermon, wading through the mysteries of the fifteenthly and sixteenthly, with a zeal that never falters.

Then, with the solemn order of precedence, the magistrates and brief gentlemen walk up first to the deacons' seat and deposit their contributions, followed by the elders, and last of all by the "common people." After the benediction we remain standing until the good minister passes down the aisle, bowing and smiling at us as he moves along. These simple services, with the brief intermission of an hour, occupy from six to eight hours. It is now near sunset, and we jog home on saddle or pillion, to pass the evening in reciting the catechism to grandfather, who, with exacting severity, tones us up to the orthodox standard.

The second meeting-house soon became insufficient to accommodate the growing population of the town, and so in 1708 we find thirteen young ladies petitioning for permission to build a pew in the "hind seat in the east end of the meeting-house," and the petition was granted, "provided said pew does not damnify or hinder the light."

And in 1720 four persons presented the following petition, "Whereas your petitioners having their habitations so distant from the meeting-house, that, at any time being belated, we cannot get into any seat, but are obliged to sit squeezed on the stairs where we cannot hear the minister, and so get little good by his preaching, though we endeavor to ever so much; and there being a vacant place betwixt the front pew, over the pew on the side gallery over the head of the stairs, we humbly request liberty to erect a seat over the same." Showing a disposition to attend Divine service under difficulties worthy of imitation in these enlightened days.

THE TOWN MEETING.

Not only did our fathers provide for their spiritual wants, but they also established that model of a pure democracy—the town meeting. Here they deliberated upon those measures which were considered to be for the best interest of the town; and the right of suffrage in local matters was granted to all. But when a magistrate was to be nominated, or a deputy to General Court to be chosen, none but "freemen," or those who had taken an oath of fidelity to the church, were allowed to vote.*

Large powers were vested in the selectmen, but they were held strictly accountable for the discharge of their duties. They were to direct in the payment of Mr. Ward's salary; to collect all

*The first record of a public meeting was in 1643, before the incorporation of the town. The object of this meeting was to prevent the unnecessary destruction of timber.—*Chase, p. 56.*

finer; to pay all debts of the town; to establish the rates of taxation; to call town meetings at discretion; to see that all the laws of the county were observed; to act in all prudential affairs of the town, according to law.

The rigid rules of punctuality were strictly enforced, and every voter who came late to town meeting was obliged to pay a fine for his delinquency. The business of these meetings was not hastily performed, for the deliberations commenced at seven o'clock in the morning, and the sturdy voice of John Johnson, the Moderator, did not falter until the adjournment at sunset. The meetings often lasted through several days before the business was all completed. For our ancestors believed in the right of speech, and each man enjoyed his prerogative to his heart's content.

Especially did those who paid a great tax claim the right to speak on every question involving the grave matter of raising money. And it was this tenacious defence of individual rights, and the consciousness of personal responsibility that gave our ancestors such boldness of utterance, and prepared them to effectually resist oppression when the crisis came.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

As early as the year 1647, it was ordered by General Court, "that every township in the jurisdiction numbering fifty families should establish and maintain a free school; and every town containing one hundred families should set up a grammar school."

This was the foundation of that system of free

schools which is the boast of our Commonwealth to-day. As Haverhill did not contain the requisite number of families, a public school was not established until several years after the passage of the order, and it was not until 1660 that Thomas Wasse was appointed master, with a salary of ten pounds a year. He was to teach the young people to read, write, and cipher. We next find Mr. James Chadwick engaged in the service, for which he was to have "three pounds in corn, besides what he shall have from scholars, parents, or masters, provided his demands should not exceed what is paid in other places for schooling, viz: to have by the week, for a reader, four pence; and for a writer, six pence." Let us hope that this generous salary was faithfully paid to Master Chadwick, and that he did not have to gather the corn with his own hands. In 1791 the town was "presented" for not having a school according to law, and a Mr. Tufts was accordingly chosen master at a salary of thirty pounds a year; but the town was so impoverished by the war with the Indians that the court exempted the people from supporting a grammar school for three years, and so Master Tufts was dismissed from his charge.

In 1711, a grammar school was established, and the selectmen were ordered to hire a master who was to "move quarterly to such places as the selectmen agree to, as shall be most convenient for the inhabitants of the town." But thanks to the spirit of the pedagogue, no one could be found willing to submit to such a migratory life.

So the disagreeable condition was annulled, and Obadiah Ayer was employed to teach for half a year, for which he was to receive fifteen pounds, a generous advance on the salary of poor Chadwick.

In after years, at the close of the Indian difficulties, the town began to prosper; and a comely schoolhouse was erected at the head of Main street, and boys were taught, not only the common rudiments of learning, but were also instructed in Latin; and some of the rules and regulations adopted for the government of the school give evidence of the wisdom of our fathers in the work of education. Among these regulations, we find the recognition of the Divine government, the inculcation of reverence for parents and guardians, and the practice of virtue and patriotism on the part of the children; the exercise of a parental government by the teachers, and the importance of self-control in the infliction of discipline, and the guarded and judicious use of corporeal punishment, in extreme cases only,—a regulation, which many can testify, was too often forgotten by the imperious dominie.

With these three mighty forces, the meeting house, the town meeting and the public school, our ancestors began the foundation work of our ancient town. Crude and humble indeed were these appliances, and the work moved slowly, and oftentimes wearily and sadly, through the first century of our existence. But amid all the mistakes of judgment which we find recorded, the foundations were well laid, and they will re-

main unshaken and undisturbed as long as there is virtue, and integrity, and a love for the largest and purest liberty remaining among the children. Grand old Fathers! inspire us with devout thankfulness for the recognition of the Divine Presence in all human affairs; for the inculcation of the principle that men have an inherent right and capacity to manage their own local concerns, and that the diffusion of intelligence is essential for the safety and the greatness of a people!

As long as we cherish those fundamental principles and hold on to them with a pious tenacity, so long will our safety be secure. But woe be-tide us when we let go of the Bible, the suffrage, and the common school. God grant that we may inherit enough of the stern old Puritan spirit to retain these safeguards forever!

INDIAN HOSTILITIES.

During the first century of our history the growth and prosperity of the town were greatly embarrassed by the depredations of the savage tribes scattered through the vast tract of country lying between our frontier and the Canada line. These barbarous hordes, jealous of the aggressions of the white men, and emboldened by the butcheries of the Deerfield massacre, and the temporary successes of the King Philip's war, swept down upon the defenceless inhabitants with ruthless treachery, making indiscriminate slaughter among the men, women and children of the village. Many are the tales of woe told by those who suffered long captivity in the wilds of Canada, and the deeds of heroism are scattered all

over the pages of our early history. The people were obliged to place the village in a state of defence; fortifications were thrown up around the meeting-house, and garrisons were erected in different sections of the town, and supplied with soldiers to be ready for any emergency. Every man was armed. The laborer in the field had his gun near at hand, and the Sunday worshipper carried his loaded weapon to the house of God, and grasped it while engaged in prayer. The women and children were filled with consternation and constant alarm, for the recital of inhuman butcheries was always before them. Not only Haverhill, but the neighboring towns of Bradford and Andover, (and in fact nearly every township in the colony,) were made the scene of bloody warfare, and all the energies of the people were taxed to suppress and destroy the enemy.

The story of the captivity and subsequent escape of two boys, Isaac Bradley aged fifteen years, and Joseph Whittaker aged eleven years, in the fall of 1695, is full of wild romance, stranger than any of the stories of modern fiction. The boys were seized while working in the field, by a party of Indians, and carried to the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee, with the expectation of being taken to Canada and sold in the spring. With surprising strategy these brave lads managed to escape while their savage captors were sleeping, and with a power of endurance remarkable and persistent they succeeded in reaching home in nine days, through a trackless forest, marking their way by the river courses, and subsisting on

the scanty fare of the roots and barks of the wilderness. Quite as worthy, these brave boys, of a niche in our history, as was that more dramatic and tragic heroine, Hannah Duston, whose story you all know by heart. Jonathan Haynes and his four children were also taken captive two days afterward, and carried to Pennacook, (Concord, N. H.) After great suffering, the father and two of the children succeeded in regaining their liberty. The two boys never returned. Although discovered in Canada in after years by an exploring party they preferred to remain in their wild home.

Inexorable history must record the fact that the soldiers of these garrisons sometimes showed a cowardice unworthy their high calling. At one time the garrison of Joseph Bradley was attacked, and the sentries proved unequal to the defence. The savages pressed into the open door and wounded the first sentry, when the goodwife who was making soap seized a brimming ladle of the boiling liquid and threw it full into the face of the foremost savage, which caused a hasty retreat and a cessation of hostilities, for a time at least.

At another time the house of Mr. Swan was attacked, and, as the enemy pressed against the door, Mr. Swan's courage failed, and, as the savage face showed itself, he gave up in despair. Not so his intrepid wife, who, equal to the emergency, grasped a long spit and thrust it into the tawny body of the foremost savage, who, not liking this kind of reception, and uncertain of what

might follow further adventure, fled with his yelping crew into the wood.

But the most fearful and fatal attack was made during the French and Indian war, in 1708, by a large party, who invaded the town on the morning of the 29th of August. The village was wholly unguarded at the time, and the savages scattered in every direction, killing and burning. The first house attacked was that of the minister, Rev. Benjamin Rolfe. This house stood on the site of the residence of Moses Nichols, Esq. Mr. Rolfe gallantly defended his home, calling in vain upon the cowardly soldiers in the chambers to come to his assistance.

While defending his door from the tremendous force pressing against it, he received a shot fired through the oaken panels, and was instantly killed.* The savages made short work of the rest of the family, not sparing the timid soldiers. But two little children of Mr. Rolfe were saved by the strategy of Hagar, a negro servant, who hid them under a tub in the cellar, then concealing herself. The enemy entered the cellar, and drank milk from the pails, but the children were not discovered and they escaped with the faithful Hagar unharmed. In this dreadful attack about forty persons were killed and taken prisoners. Mr. Rolfe was buried in the old cemetery, and a handsome monument of granite has been erected to his memory. The rude inscriptions on the

*Another account says that Mr. Rolfe was killed while retreating from the back door of his house. But judging from what we know of Mr. Rolfe's courage, he was not the man to retreat and leave his family to the mercy of the savages.

stones of the other victims are nearly illegible, waiting for the hand of some pitying "Old Mortality" to decipher the characters hid beneath the gathering lichens.

The door of Mr. Rolfe's house was for many years preserved in the porch of the first parish meeting-house, where the marks of savage violence could be seen in the deep gaps made by the hatchets, and in the fatal bullet-holes. When the old church was demolished this door was carefully removed to the upper porch of the new edifice, but it was destroyed by fire when that handsome structure was consumed in 1847.

After the close of the Indian hostilities the town began to recover from the depression and poverty caused by the constant draft upon the resources of the people. The demoralizing effects of the war soon disappeared and a better era dawned upon the town. Business revived, meeting-houses were erected in the several parishes, and new enterprises were developed. Agriculture flourished, the water courses were utilized by the erection of mills, a trade with the Indies was established, ship-building was encouraged, and wealth and plenty smiled upon the people. Comely and imposing dwellings were erected, and the two principal streets were active with traffic from the neighboring towns. The Bartletts and Bricketts, the Duncans and Saltonstalls, the Emersons, Marshes, Whites, Ayers and Bradleys; the Appletons and Atwoods and Wainwrights, the Cogswells, the Johnsons and the Corlisses, and many other honored names ap-

pear in the history of this period. Men who vied with each other in their efforts to advance the interests of the town.

THE FRENCH WAR.

But hardly had the town recovered from the disasters of the contest, when in 1756 another war between England and France involved New England in the struggle, and Haverhill was called upon to furnish her quota of men to assist the mother country. For seven years the town held itself in readiness to furnish men, and many are the stories of Ticonderoga and Crown Point that have come down to us from the traditions of the heroes of those famous expeditions.

From the imperfect records of that period we find the familiar names of our ancestry, and it is a fact worthy of our record that Haverhill was true to her allegiance to the mother country, and her wealth and strength were freely given to sustain the prerogative of the Crown.

The successes and defeats, the glory and the shame of the several campaigns of this war, from Fort DuQuesne to Louisburg, form an eventful page in our early history, but the unwritten story is fast fading into oblivion.

THE "DISSENTERS."

In 1764 occurred one of those anomalies which sometimes confront the historian, provoking criticism and censure because of the strange inconsistency of the development.

The Rev. Hezekiah Smith, a recent graduate of Princeton, made a casual visit to Haverhill, and by his fervid eloquence produced a decided im-

pression upon the more emotional element in the First Parish. It was soon discovered that Mr. Smith inculcated certain doctrines at variance with the "Regular Order," and for fear of dissension the meeting-house was closed against him. But the "New Lights" rallied round their talented leader, and founded the First Baptist church in Haverhill on the 9th of May, 1765. The formation of this church was a sore trial to our Puritan ancestors. They had labored for over a hundred years for a unity of purpose in everything pertaining to the prosperity and permanent growth of the town, and they looked upon the enterprise of these "Dissenters" as disorganizing and destructive in the extreme, and they resorted to the most rigid measures to suppress it in its early inception. But the principles of religious freedom that our fathers had inculcated were fundamental, and must prevail. After many embarrassments, and not a little persecution, the "Dissenters" were exempted from taxation in support of "Regular Order," and in 1774, an act was passed by the General Court, exempting "Dissenters" of every name from all taxation to other denominations, provided they filed a certificate from the proper authorities of their own denomination certifying that they were members thereof and paid taxes accordingly. But these conditions were odious to some, and frequent difficulties occurred by non-compliance with them. After many years of contest, the law was so modified as to allow of no distinction in the rights and privileges of religious bodies.

The Baptists soon erected a meeting-house upon the site of the present structure of the original church, and for forty years Mr. Smith remained the eloquent and godly pastor of the church, when he was removed by death, January 24, 1805, at the age of 68 years. And thus our fathers, in the foundation work of the town, "Builded better than they knew."

THE REVOLUTION

In 1765 those incipient causes that led to the Revolution began to develop. The aggressions of the mother country increased, and the odious Stamp Act had been passed by Parliament and forced upon the people of the colonies. Our fathers believed in loyalty to their sovereign, but they hated oppression, and declared the action of Parliament unconstitutional. Our representative in General Court, Col. Saltonstall, was instructed by the town to express the sentiments of the people in the form of a protest against the excise laws, and to strive by all lawful means for the repeal of the same. But all remonstrance proved unavailing, and when Samuel Adams pronounced his famous protest against the revenue act which resulted in the dissolution of the Legislature in 1768, the town voted to sustain and commend the action.* But our fathers did not act with hot haste in this grave matter of resistance. In the convention held in Faneuil Hall the same year for deliberation, our Haverhill delegate, Samuel

*This document was drawn up with the greatest care, and after several days' debate: "Seven times revised, every word weighed, every sentence considered." it was adopted and published to the world as expressing the sentiments of Massachusetts.—*Chase*, p 365.

Bachelor, was instructed "In every constitutional way and manner consistent with our loyalty to our sovereign, to oppose and prevent the levying or collecting money from us not granted by ourselves or our legal Representatives." But the calm deliberations of this convention were unavailing. The stamped paper must be used, the tax on tea shall be paid, and the port of Boston shall remain closed. You are all familiar with the sublime history of this period.

True to her pledges, the town *Resolved*, July 28, 1774,

"That we will not import, purchase, vend or consume any East India tea until the duty imposed upon importation into the colonies be taken off and the port of Boston open."

These are the words of men who are in earnest, willing to do as well as to resolve. And when on the afternoon of the 19th of April of the following year, the news of the battle of Lexington reached Haverhill, the little village was all astir with excitement. That intrepid son of liberty, Dr. James Brickett, commenced the work of raising minute men, to march at once to the scene of action, and before night one hundred and five Haverhill men (almost one-half of the entire military force of the town) under the command of Capt. Jas. Sawyer were on the march to Cambridge. Thus promptly did our patriot fathers respond, notwithstanding that three days previous the business portion of Main street had been destroyed by fire in which seventeen buildings were

consumed, including some of the largest stores in town.

Not only did Haverhill bring honor to our history by this ready response, but she also shared in that romantic adventure which Longfellow has immortalized in heroic verse—"The ride of Paul Revere." It was William Baker, a Haverhill man, twenty years of age, who first carried the news of the intention of the British to march on Concord, to our forces in Charlestown. Baker was at work in a distillery in Boston, situated on what is now Portland street. The British soldiers were in the habit of visiting this distillery, and by accident the intention to march on Concord was disclosed in some convivial conversation of the soldiers on one of these visits, on the evening of the 18th of April, and Baker was delegated to carry the news to Warren, by passing the British lines. This he accomplished by consummate strategy, and as Warren was absent from home, he carried the news to Adjutant Devens, who had Dea. Larkin's fast horse ready for Paul Revere when he

"Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore."

The signal lights were shown from the old North steeple—

"One, if by land, and two, if by sea."

The watchful hero "springs to his saddle," and the ride of Paul Revere passes into history.

The battle of Bunker Hill soon followed, and of the thousand men sent to throw up the redoubt, Haverhill had fifty-two. And in the general engagement on the 17th of June the number

of our patriot sons was seventy-four. Dr. Brickett, (also Col.), was very active during the engagement, and while standing near Gen. Putnam, a shot from one of the ships struck the plank upon which they were standing, wounding Brickett in the foot, and so disabling him that he was taken to the other side of the hill. But nothing daunted, he at once used his skill as surgeon in attending to the wounded as they were brought in from the scene of action. Noble patriot that he was! serving throughout the war, and amid many personal sacrifices rising to the rank of Brigadier General. He lived to close an honorable career in his native town in the practice of his profession which he so much adorned.

Among those who responded to the call for men was Capt. Nehemiah Emerson. When the news from Lexington reached Haverhill he was assisting in extinguishing a fire upon the roof of a house then standing opposite this City Hall. He at once determined to march to the scene of action. He joined the minute-men, and throughout the whole Revolutionary struggle he returned home only once. He was complimented by Washington as "a brave officer, a good disciplinarian, and one who never lost his temper."

And now came the grave question of the Declaration of Independence. It was a bold step to take, and it was not taken hastily. In town meeting, June 25, 1776, the town voted "That if the honorable Congress, for the safety of the United Colonies, should declare themselves independent of the kingdom of Great Britain, this

town do engage with their lives and fortunes to support them in the measure." One hundred years ago this sacred, solemn hour, the Continental Congress was considering the momentous question, freighted with the destiny of a nation. We can imagine that assembly of grave, earnest men, as they group around the table in Independence Hall, to sign the Magna Charta, for which they stood ready to endure any sacrifice. There sits Hancock in stately dignity, presiding over the great transaction; there the youthful Jefferson, presenting the immortal Instrument which he had framed; near him stand the great advocates and defenders, John and Samuel Adams; there, too, serene in his old age, we behold the patriot philosopher, Benjamin Franklin, and there, "wearing his weight of learning like a crown," the scholar and scientist, Benjamin Rush, and the other worthies whose names have passed into history. O, that with prophetic vision they could have looked down through the century to see the mighty generations that stand up to-day to bless them, and to behold the greatness of the people to whom they gave a country! And as to-day, in the fair city of Brotherly Love, the nations of the earth assemble to witness the results of this deed, may the spirit of devout thankfulness mingle with our rejoicing.

It is only needful to say that during that long and painful struggle Haverhill did not falter, but, amid poverty and embarrassment, she furnished her full quota of men, and bore her full share of the cost. The pledges solemnly made in town

meeting were sacredly kept, and "lives and fortunes" were freely offered in the long and bloody strife. In the darkest days there were hopeful hearts, and many a noble lesson was taught by the self-sacrificing devotion of woman. When the troops were suffering during that dreadful winter at Valley Forge, the women of Haverhill were busy in making garments and bedding, and hundreds of articles were forwarded to the camps of our soldiers during the war. We have the record of five hundred and twenty-four garments and a hundred pairs of shoes furnished by our people, besides large stores of provisions and contributions of money. The taxes of the town bore heavily upon the people, but individuals were found willing to loan money. The town's proportion of the tax laid by Congress, March 8, 1779, was thirty-eight thousand eight hundred and seventy-six pounds; and in ten days after Congress laid another tax, of which the town's proportion was thirty-nine thousand two hundred pounds. Of course these sums were in the depreciated continental currency, but large sums nevertheless for the people to furnish. In September the town was called upon to furnish sixteen thousand eight hundred pounds of beef, and they promptly chose a committee to purchase it. And the next year, 1780, the call was made for thirty-two thousand two hundred and fifty-six pounds, and hardly had this been collected when they were called upon for thirteen thousand three hundred and fourteen pounds more. These were all raised and forwarded before the coming on of winter.

With such zeal and such sacrifice did our fathers fulfill their recorded pledges. And was not this spirit transmitted to the children, when in our later and terrible struggle to maintain the unity of our government, their noble, patriot sons answered to the roll-call, and marched to the music of Union and Liberty !

AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

But the long, dark days of the war were fading away, and the successes of our arms, under the inspiring aid of our French allies, gave new life to the colonists, and, at the final surrender of Cornwallis, a thrill of joy pervaded the whole people. Crippled in their energies, and embarrassed with debt and poverty, our fathers at once commenced the work of restoring their broken fortunes. The business that had gone to ruin began to revive under the persistent energy of the Anglo-Saxon spirit, and trade was invited to Haverhill from the distant towns of New Hampshire. That indomitable merchant, John White, soon opened a trade with the Indies, while Benjamin Willis, James Duncan, and Isaac Osgood pushed their business far into the country, sending their goods in heavily laden ox teams.

Agriculture began to flourish, and many fine orchards were planted in various parts of the town. The new State Constitution had been ratified by the people, after much deliberation and many amendments. Our delegate to the convention that framed this important document was Gen. James Brickett, whose wisdom and prudence

gave character to the town he represented. Our first representative to the General Court under the new Constitution was Hon. Bailey Bartlett, who did honor to every high trust committed to him. He was also the first State Senator sent from Haverhill, and he afterwards (1797,) represented this district in Congress—the first citizen of Haverhill who had received that high distinction. This noble son of Haverhill was subsequently appointed High Sheriff of Essex county, receiving his commission from the hands of Gov. Hancock in person, who stated that this was the only nomination made during his administration that had met with the unanimous approval of the Council. This commission he held forty years, when he was gathered to his fathers, full of years and the honors of a noble life.

Soon after the close of the war, a young man, fresh with the laurels of the Revolutionary struggle, came to Haverhill and commenced business in a humble way in a small shop in the basement of a wooden building on Water street. By prudence, economy, and an intuitive capacity for trade, he gradually increased his stock of goods, and after a few years of continued success he built a block of stores—still standing—on Main street, and filled the same with goods of every description, and the name of David How became known throughout New England, and his character as a first-class country merchant was firmly established. Not only did Mr. How give great impetus to trade, but in later years he turned his attention to agriculture, and through his extend-

ed operations large tracts of waste land were brought under a high state of cultivation. Many of the fine old orchards that cover our graceful hill-slopes were planted under his direction.

Mr. How was truly a representative man—a noble example of New England character of the best type. He took part in the engagement at Bunker Hill, and was always enthusiastic when questioned as to the relative positions of Putnam and Prescott in that famous action. "If it had not been for Prescott," said he, "there would have been no fight. He was all night and all the morning inspiring the soldiers with his encouraging words in such a way that they felt like fight. To him belongs the honor of command in that engagement."

But time would fail us in enumerating all the names that gave character to this period of our history. We might speak of Israel Bartlett, a son of the Revolution, who filled many high offices of trust; of Nathaniel Marsh, who was a delegate to the convention called to ratify the federal Constitution; of Leonard White, who represented us in Congress, and who was afterwards—1814—cashier of the first bank; of that ingenious mechanic, Col. Blodgett, who contrived an apparatus for raising the British ship-of-the-line, the "Royal George," but who was looked upon by our English cousins as a Yankee enthusiast. By every possible means the strong elements of character inherited from their ancestry were developed, and the blessings of a free Constitution began to be felt and enjoyed.

The little village, stretched along the river bank and nestled under the sunny slope, gradually gave evidence of comfort, peace, and plenty. The comely spires of the two churches added to the picturesque scene; the little schoolhouse showed its frail turret at the head of the common; the ship-yards bristled with oaken skeletons upon the stocks; the parishes increased in population, and small villages were gathered in the extreme limits of the town. The village fostered its harmless aristocracy, and the gentleman, the magistrate, and the minister, in the conventional small clothes and cocked hat, received the salutations of the humbler citizens with lofty urbanity.

The school children grouped themselves by the wayside, and respectfully greeted the dignitaries as they passed by; and when the minister entered the school to catechize the children, they all stood in respectful silence until the honored visitor was seated. The goodwife and her daughter spun the flax and the wool, and wove them into fabrics, or, with cunning fingers, wrought the sampler and the fanciful screen. The comely maiden dressed in scanty brocade, with dainty, high-heeled, satin slippers, walked through the intricacies of the stately minuet, with her prim partner arrayed in silk coat and waistcoat and well-fitting stockings. Now and then a primitive chaise would rumble by with a wealthy occupant, but oftener the good dame would ride on horseback to church, seated on a pillion behind her lord and master. A becoming dignity, and not a little formal ceremony, marked the social relations of the people, and

deference to authority and position was the rule of action among all classes.

Sometimes the order of precedence was carried to a ludicrous excess, and much deferential bowing and obsequious compliment were bestowed upon trivial matters which would seem childish in our time, when republican principles are so thoroughly diffused among the people.

At this period the houses of the wealthier classes begin to make considerable pretensions to elegance. Long flights of steps lead to the Greek portico. The massive door, adorned with huge brass knocker, opens into the stately hall, with its handsome staircase mounting with low steps to the chambers. The oaken floors show a highly polished surface, and oftentimes fanciful decorations in paint. The heavy furniture stands in stiff array against the wainscoted wall, and massive mirrors reflect the glories of the best room. The hospitable sideboard glitters with glass and silver, and the cold joint is ready for the casual visitor.

The more humble dwellings present an air of comfort and thrift and healthful plenty, refreshing to behold. The great kitchen with "nicely sanded floor" is ample for every welcome guest. Pewter platters glitter in comely array upon the dressers; the family china is daintily preserved in the buffet in the corner; the huge fireplace sends out a ruddy glow, while plenty of good cheer awaits the hungry and thirsty neighbor and wayfarer.

If we enter the little schoolhouse at the head of

the common, we find the boys primly seated upon rude forms arranged against the wall, while the older pupils sit behind primitive desks, upon which are scattered Webster's Third Part, the Columbian Orator, and Pike's Arithmetic. The master, perched in stately dignity upon his leather-seated throne, is writing copies, stopping now and then to put a finer nib on the point of his goose-quill, and giving occasionally an official rap with his oaken ruler, as some delinquent wight, forgetful of his task, falls into day-dreaming, or tries the edge of his new jackknife upon the pine bench before him.

Simplicity, frugality, contentment, were the elements that made up the sum of daily life.

"O luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for
thee!"

THE VISIT OF WASHINGTON.

The visit of Washington, the first President of the United States, to Haverhill, in November, 1780, was the occasion of universal welcome and rejoicing. Washington was making a brief tour through New England, and Haverhill coveted the honor of a visit; and great were the preparations made by the people for his reception. The presidential party entered the village from the north, on Wednesday, Nov. 4th, at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and a large cavalcade gave escort to the august visitor, marching down Main street, and halting at the "Mason's Arms," Harrod's

tavern, a brown old building standing on the site of this City Hall. In this tavern, Washington passed the night.—

“When the Father of his Country
Through this northland riding came,
And the roofs were starred with banners,
And the steeples rang acclaim,

When each war-scarred Continental,
Leaving smithy, mill, and farm,
Waved his rusty sword in welcome,
And shot off his old king’s-arm,

Slowly passed that august Presence,
Down the thronged and shouting street:
Village girls, as white as angels,
Scattering flowers around his feet.”

During his brief stay in Haverhill, Washington made a tour of inspection through the village, visiting the duck factory of Colonel Blodgett, which was at that time a great curiosity. He also called upon John White and Bailey Bartlett, both of whom were personal friends.

It is said that he was greatly charmed with the scenery of the Merrimack valley, and that he specially praised the lovely situation of our village. Our own poet, Whittier, whose words we have just quoted, has charmingly described this scene in his matchless verse:—

“Mid-way, where the plane-tree’s shadow
Deepest fell, his rein he drew;
On his stately head, uncovered,
Cool and soft the west wind blew;

“And he stood up in his stirrups,
 Looking up and looking down
 On the hills of Gold and Silver,
 Rimming round the little town,—

“On the river, full of sunshine,
 To the lap of greenest vales,
 Winding down from wooded headlands,
 Willow-skirted, white with sails,—

“And he said, the landscape sweeping
 Slowly with his ungloved hand,
 ‘I have seen no prospect fairer
 In this goodly Eastern land.’

“Then the bugles of his escort
 Stirred to life the cavalcade;
 And that head, so bare and stately,
 Vanished down the depths of shade.”

On the following morning, Washington was to cross the river at the old ferry way. Crowds had gathered on the grassy slope to witness his departure; the river was filled with small boats, and the fishing-smacks dipped their scanty flags as the chief approached the river shore. Now came the sublime moment, as Washington stood in the slowly receding boat, waving his chapeau to the assembled people on the amphitheatre before him. Enthusiasm could be suppressed no longer, and a spontaneous shout arose upon the morning air.

This noisy demonstration did not meet the approval of that grand old soldier, Gen. Brickett,

who conducted the ceremonies; and, waving his battle-sword before the people, he bade them cease their clamor, "Look at him, but insult him not with vulgar noise," he said; and so in silence, grand and complete, the stately form receded from view.*

THE EARLY OBSERVANCE OF THE DAY WE CELEBRATE.

The glowing words of John Adams in the Continental Congress in regard to the observance of the "day we celebrate" did not seem to inspire our fathers with special enthusiasm, for we find no record of any public observance of the day, until 1802, when a company of gentlemen celebrated the anniversary by a dinner at Bradley's tavern, followed by patriotic toasts. This was before the day of reporters, and so those eloquent words are lost forever. But in 1821, the town joined in a more imposing display; consisting of music, a procession, an oration, a dinner, with a grand display of fireworks in the evening. We read in the HAVERHILL GAZETTE of that date, that "the procession formed at Mason's Hall, on Water street, and marched to Rev. Mr. Dodge's meeting-house, where the Declaration of Independence was read by James Duncan, Esq., and an oration delivered by James H. Duncan, Esq., after which the procession re-formed and marched to Kendall's Hotel, where a bountiful dinner was disposed of, followed by patriotic toasts.

In the evening there was a brilliant display of

*Related to the writer, many years since, by an eye-witness of the scene.

fireworks in front of the meeting-house, in the following order:—

PART 1ST.

Rockets, A wheel. A shower of rockets. Cupid's escape from the hornet's nest.

PART 2ND.

A wheel. Rockets. A wheel. Shower of rockets. Cupid's escape from a hornet's, nest."

OUR LATE HISTORY.

During the first half of the present century the growth of this town in wealth and population was very slow. The country trade, the river navigation, and the establishment of the Eastern Stage Company furnished sources of industry which were developed by the frugal inhabitants. Gradually the manufacture of shoes, commenced about fifty years ago, increased in importance, and thousands of cases were carried yearly to Boston on "baggage wagons" by Rufus Slocomb, before the opening of the Boston & Maine railroad.

The last quarter of a century has seen this great industry assume a magnitude that has added wealth and prosperity and greatness to our city, placing us third in rank in the country in the amount of goods manufactured. Our churches, our schools, our charities,* have kept pace

*The Children's Aid Society, for homeless children, was established in 1872.

The Old Ladies Home Association, for indigent old ladies, was opened in 1876.

The Benevolent Society, for the relief of the worthy poor, was established in 1817.

with our material prosperity, and we point with just and honest pride to-day to these results of a slow, patient, healthy growth.

Many of the sons of Haverhill have not forgotten the place of their birth, nor their indebtedness for the opportunities furnished them in their progress to success. And we rejoice to-day in the beneficence of one of her sons that has opened to us the sources of intelligence that shall be perpetuated through the generations to come.†

Sons of Haverhill, wherever you are at this hour—scattered up and down the earth, engaged in the great enterprises that open before us—in the halls of legislation, in the world of letters, in the pulpit, at the bar, in the school or the workshop.—rejoice with us in the goodly record spread out before us, of the deeds of the fathers who laid these foundations upon which we so fearlessly build!

And our fellow-citizens, sons of Maine, New Hampshire, and the neighboring towns of our own Commonwealth, attracted hither by our prosperity, adding to our wealth and influence, and receiving in return the benefits of our free institutions, we welcome you to this heritage so richly transmitted to us by our fathers.

And we welcome all, of whatever name and nation, who come among us to share in our industries, and to assist in the maintenance of law and order and public integrity.

†The Haverhill Public Library, founded by the munificence of Hon. E. J. M. Hale, with the co-operation of the citizens, was opened to the public in 1875.

And permit me to congratulate you, Mr. Mayor, that it has fallen to your lot to fill the highest place in the gift of your native city, in this centennial year. May the era of reform, as seen in the great temperance movement, and so emphatically endorsed by your administration, continue as long as there remains a love for virtue, and honor, and righteousness, among the inhabitants of our ancient and beloved Haverhill.

OUR FUTURE.

The monarchies of the Old World condemn Republics because of their lack of reverence, and their ingratitude to those who have shaped their history; and to this defect in character they predict our ultimate disintegration. There may be much of truth in this charge. We have no dim past, winding down through the centuries to inspire the imagination with tradition and romantic story. We cannot show the ruins of feudal castles, nor can we boast of the sublime results of mediæval architecture. We have no thrones to revere, nor any noble lines of royalty to inspire us with awe.

But in lack of these proud themes of the historian, have we not a noble ancestry of sturdy men and true? Have we not the record of firm loyalty to principle, and the establishment of a government upon the basis of virtue, intelligence and a recognition of individual right, and individual responsibility? These we receive from the founders of the nation, and is not the gift of sufficient excellence to inspire our devout reverence and grat-

itude? But with the tremendous responsibility of "universal suffrage" comes the corresponding obligation of extending universal intelligence. It is our province to take up this burden, and to give no quarter until, throughout the length and the breadth of the land, the blessings of common school instruction shall be enjoyed by all. God grant, that, when the next centennial shall usher in its great anniversary, the mighty generations may rise up, and with united and devout hearts be able to exclaim, "See this goodly land that is given to us by the noble sacrifice of the Fathers!"



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